



Image

48
MAY

DIGITAL EDITION

SPAWN



TONY
DANIEL
KEVIN
KONRAD
T. BOKER

image® COMICS PRESENTS:

"THE SYSTEM"



Spawn #47 Summary:

At Spawn's request, Tremor drags Scambino, one of Twist's thugs, to the alley for interrogation. Meanwhile, Clown lets Wynn know of Spawn's return, and should be attacked now in his weakened state. Realizing that he must use his brains to impress Malebolgia, Clown enlists Wynn to bring down Spawn. At the same time, deep within Rat City, Cog finds a barricade built by Spawn, and wonders if Spawn's costume has overpowered its master. Later that evening, Tremor visits Twist as he is still haunted by the news that his brother, David, could be alive. There he discovers first hand that David works for Twist. Just as Tremor finds himself cornered, Spawn arrives and warns Twist, once again, to stay away from Wanda. Taking David with them, Tremor and Spawn leave Twist's security force in shambles.

FOR IMAGE COMICS
LARRY MARDER - exec. director

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Director Of Creative Development: TERRY FITZGERALD.
Graphics Coordinator: JULIA SIMMONS.



story
TODD McFARLANE
pencils
TONY DANIEL
inks
KEVIN CONRAD
copy editor & letters
TOM ORZECHOWSKI
color
TODD BROEKER
ROY YOUNG

AT EIGHTEEN FEET, THE OFFICE CEILINGS ARE IMPRESSIVE, GIVING THE ROOM AN IMMENSE DEPTH. THE WALL PANELS ARE IMPORTED CHERRY-WOOD; BEHIND THEM, BANKS OF RETRIEVAL, SURVEILLANCE AND SECURITY SYSTEMS. FEATURED IN THE DECOR ARE STATUARY AND FURNITURE OF A PATRICIAN, VAGUELY CONDESCENDING STYLE, LAID UPON LUSH ORIENTAL CARPETING.

VERY FEW OFFICES CAN MATCH IT. BEING A CLOSE CONFIDANT TO THE PRESIDENT AND OTHER WORLD LEADERS DOES CARRY FRINGE BENEFITS. UNLIKE OTHER GOVERNMENTAL OFFICES BUILT TO THE SAME SPECIFICATIONS, THIS ONE BELIES ITS PURPOSE. RATHER THAN GIVING A SENSE OF HIGH PRESENCE AND ELEGANCE, THE LIGHTING HAS BEEN MODIFIED TO ILLUMINATE ONLY THE NECESSITIES. DEPENDING ON THE TIME OF DAY, IT APPEARS ALMOST AS A CANDLE-LIT FUNERAL PARLOR... OR AT NIGHT, A BLACK HOLE.

C.I.A. SECURITY HEAD JASON WYNN LIKES IT THAT WAY.



WE'VE PUT THE PROPER DOCUMENTS TOGETHER, ALONG WITH DENIABLY SUBSTANTIATED EVIDENCE. EVERYTHING TIES INTO A COHESIVE PRESENTATION THAT SHOULD CONVINCE THE RECIPIENTS THAT IT'S ALL FACTUAL.

WE PLAN ON MAKING THE DROP LATER TODAY.

EXCELLENT.

AND OUR OTHER INTERESTS...?

THE GUATEMALAN EMBASSY IS PREPARED TO HONOR YOUR REQUESTS. GENERAL HORTAS AND HIS STAFF ARE IN LINE WITH YOUR POSITION TO DEFY THE DEPOSED, TERRORIST LEADER. ADDITIONALLY, IN LIGHT OF THEIR PAST ENCOUNTERS WITH HIM, THE GENERAL HAS MADE READY EXTRA AIR SUPPORT FOR YOUR AGENTS.

IN FRANCE, SEVERAL OUTPOSTS OF THE RADICAL "PEOPLE FOR A NEW MONARCHY" HAVE BEEN...

THE LAUNDRY LIST OF RECENT U.S. INTELLIGENCE ACTIVITIES CONTINUES FOR ANOTHER HOUR.

"I DON'T WANT THEM TO KNOW WHAT DIRECTION YOU'RE COMING FROM."

HEY!
WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING!

TEN HOURS LATER, ON MANHATTAN'S LOWER EAST SIDE...

Um... SORRY ABOUT THAT, TWITCH. I SHOULD HAVE WARNED YOU. SOME OF THE SUPPLIES CAME IN EARLY YESTERDAY AND I DIDN'T WANT THEM JUST LYING AROUND.

SO I JUST STUFFED EVERYTHING IN THERE.

SO I SEE.

SO ANYWAYS, THIS IS WHERE OUR SECRETARY WILL SIT, ONCE WE'RE BUSY ENOUGH TO AFFORD ONE.

IN THE MEANTIME, I THOUGHT WE COULD JUST PUT A DESK AND A FEW FILE CABINETS OUT HERE AND TELL OUR CLIENTS SHE'S ON AN EXTENDED LUNCH BREAK.

EXPLAIN TO ME AGAIN, SIR, WHY YOU HAD TO DECIDE ON THIS SPACE SO QUICKLY?

THE REALTOR SAID SHE HAD OTHER BITES. IT WAS GOING TO GO FAST!

I'M SURE.

COME ON!
I WANT TO SHOW YOU OUR OFFICE.

Oh MY GOD!
TWITCH!!



THE LULL OF THE
MOMENT ENDS ABRUPTLY.
BOTH DETECTIVES TURN
INSTINCTIVELY, ALERTED
BY A HUSHED SCRATCHING.

THE PACKET STOPS A FEW
FEET INSIDE THE OFFICE.

YOU
SAID
THERE
WASN'T
ANYONE
ON THIS
FLOOR.

THERE
ISN'T.

THEN YOU COVER
ME, I'M
CHECKING
THIS OUT.

THEY
TARGET-
SWEEP
THE
ENTIRE
LEVEL.

NOTHING!

CRIPES!
WHO
THE HELL
KNEW
WE'D **BE**
HERE?

I DON'T
HAVE
THAT
ANSWER,
SIR.

BUT IT APPEARS
SOMEBODY HAS A
GRUDGE AGAINST THE
MEN IN CHIEF BANKS'
CIRCLE OF FRIENDS WHO
WE TRIED TO EXPOSE.*
EVERY ONE WHO WAS
CLEARED OF INVOLV-
EMENT IS HERE.

*ISSUE 43 -- Tom.

WITH NEW
INFORMATION
ON THEIR
CRIMINAL
ACTIVITIES.

SO
WE'VE GOT
A **RAT**
IN OUR
MIDST.

IT
APPEARS
SO, BUT
A FEW NEW
PIECES
HAVE ALSO
BEEN
ADDED.



I HEARD THAT, TOO.

THINKS HE CAN KEEP COMING AND GOING LIKE HE'S SOME BIG SHOT!

WE DON'T NEED THAT. NOT HIM OR HIS TROUBLES!

GIVE IT A REST, JODY. ARE YOU STUPID, MAN?! YOU AIN'T GONNA STOP SPAWN. SO GET OFF IT. THE DUDE'S SOME KINDA FREAK.

...THEN I'D BE ABLE TO GO WHERE HE WASN'T.

YOU'VE SEEN WHAT HE CAN DO. MY CONCERN AIN'T ABOUT HIM BEING IN OUR ALLEYS. I JUST WISH HE'D STOP ROAMING SO MUCH...

NOTHING. I-- I DIDN'T EVEN KNOW HE'D RETURNED.

HEY BOBBY! WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT YOUR SO-CALLED PAL?

WHAT?

YOU MEAN TO TELL ME HE HASN'T SAID NOTHIN' TO YOU? WHAT KINDA FRIEND IS THAT?

WHY DON'T YOU AND BOOTSY SMELL THE COFFEE. HE DON'T GIVE A CRAP ABOUT YOU.

SEE, WHERE I COME FROM, THERE'S NO SUCH THING AS A **PART-TIME** PAL. YOU LET PEOPLE YOU LIKE KNOW YOU'RE IN TOWN.

EXCEPT YOU'RE OVER-LOOKING SOMETHING FELLAS, AL ISN'T LIKE THE **REST** OF US. SO HE DON'T HAVE TO ACT OR DO ANYTHING THAT MAKES SENSE TO US.

RIGHT, BOOTSY! AL'S EARNED WHATEVER LIFESTYLE HE WANTS. IT SEEMS A FEW OF US HAVE FORGOTTEN WHAT WE WERE LIKE WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVED.

OH, PLEASE! CAN THE SARCASM, BOBBY. YOU WHAT TO BE SUCKED INTO HIS CHARADE... GOD **BLESS** YOU!

TO BOBBY AND BOOTSY! WHIPPING BOYS TO AL, THE **KING OF BLOOD**.

HERE! HERE!

I'LL DRINK TO THAT...

BELCH

HA HA HA HA HA HA

IT GOES
ESSEN-
TIALY
UNNO-
TICED, THE
POUNDING.

LOST AMONGST
THE COUNTLESS
OTHER SOUNDS.

THOSE WHO DO
ACKNOWLEDGE
IT ARE AWARE
OF WHERE IT
COMES FROM:

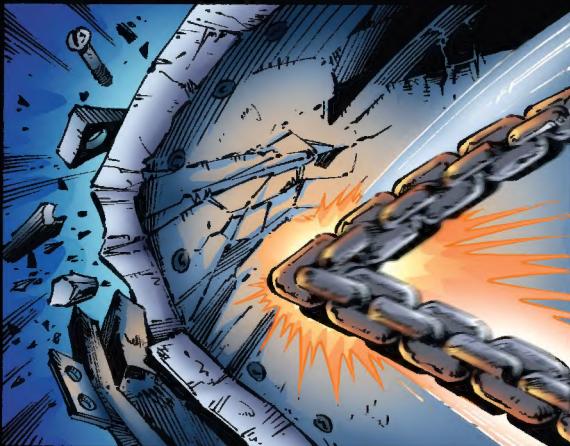
BAM BAM KRAK BAM

KRISH
BAM BAM

RAT
CITY.

THE
ALLEY'S
DEEPEST
REACHES.

CRUNK
BAM BAM SCRAPPY BAM
SKREEK BAM





A PLACE EVEN
THE HARD-CASE
SOCIOPATHS
FEAR.

A PLACE
WHERE DARK
SOULS ATTEMPT
TO VANISH.



NONE ENTIRELY
SUCCESSFULLY.

SPAWN!

AL!

WHY ARE
YOU DOING
THIS TO YOURSELF?
CONTINUING TO PLAY
INTO THE DEVIL'S
HANDS. OR MAYBE
IT'S NOT YOU. MAYBE
THE COSTUME HAS
FINALLY TAKEN
TOTAL
CONTROL.

THE
COSTUME
HAS NOTHING
TO DO WITH
THIS.

OH,
REALLY?



YES!

SO YOU'RE
PURPOSELY
BUILDING THIS
PRISON ON
YOUR OWN.

TRYING
TO ISOLATE
YOURSELF
FROM OTHERS.
HIDE FROM
LIFE'S
REALITIES.

YEAH,
THAT'S IT.
BUT NOW YOU
KNOW WHERE I'M
AT. SO I GUESS
I'VE FAILED.

YOU
DON'T
KNOW THE
HALF OF
IT.

THEN
TELL
ME ABOUT
IT!!

GKK=

I'M GETTING
SICK AND
TIRED OF YOU.
POPPING UP
WHENEVER YOU
FEEL LIKE IT...
PREACHING YOUR
GODDAMN
MYSTERIES...!!

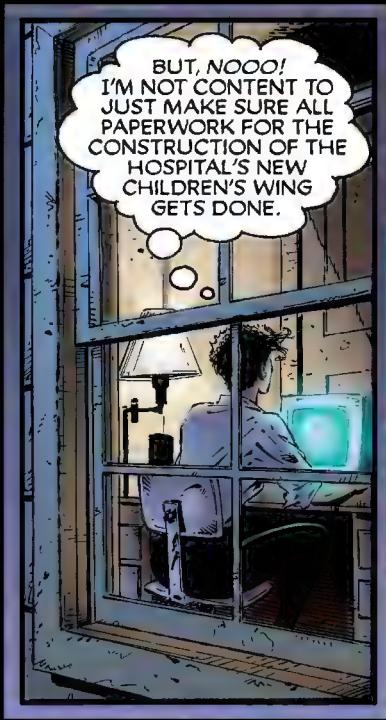
YOU HAVE
SOMETHING
TO ME, THEN
SAY IT!!

BECAUSE
I'M TOO EASY A
TARGET. TREMOR. OVERT-
KILL. THE CURSE. **EVERYONE**
SEEMS TO KNOW WHERE TO
FIND ME. WELL, NOT
ANY MORE!

FROM
NOW ON,
I DON'T
EXIST.

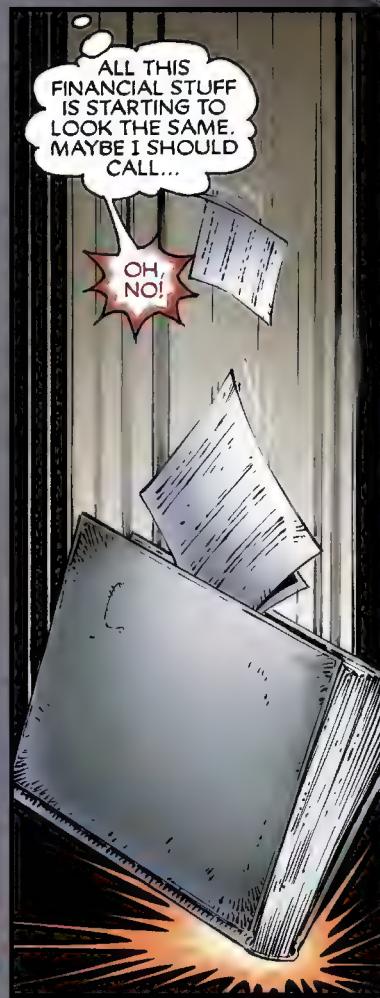
YES YOU
DO. YOU'RE
THE ONLY ONE
WHO WON'T
ACCEPT
THAT.

QUEENS.
THE NEXT
EVENING...



NOPE. THAT ALL-CONSUMING TASK WASN'T ENOUGH. I NEEDED MORE. AND SARAH EVEN TRIED TO TALK ME OUT OF IT--TWICE.

I SHOULD HAVE LISTENED TO HER.



C.I.A. HEAD-
QUARTERS,
MANHATTAN.

AGENT TERRY
FITZGERALD
WAITS FOR HIS
GLOBAL SEARCH
TO LOCATE THE
REQUESTED
DATA.

IF ALL GOES WELL, HE'LL NOW
HAVE ACCESS TO FILES THAT
HAVE BEEN RE-ROUTED AND
ENCODED TO NESTLE QUIETLY
IN OBSCURE SUB-DIRECTORIES.

A LOOP HAD BEEN SET
UP TO DIVERT ANY
INQUIRIES INTO ANOTHER,
SIMILAR, LOCATION.

TERRY'S HOPING THAT
HIS ENDLESS OVERTIME
HOURS WILL FINALLY
BEAR FRUIT.

C'MON, BABY.
DON'T CRASH
ON ME NOW.

MY GOD.

IT **IS** WYNN! I
KNEW IT! THE
INCONSISTENCIES
IN A FEW ARMA-
MENT SHIPMENTS
LEAD BACK HERE
...TO **HIM**.

NOW I JUST
HAVE TO FIND A
WAY TO NAIL HIS
ASS TO THE WALL.
BUT WITH THE...

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?

PERFECT! I
WAS BEGINNING
TO THINK I'D
NEVER SORT
THROUGH HIS
DEFENSES.

HE RUBS HIS
EYES REPEAT-
EDLY. AFTER
A MINUTE
THE BLURRING
CLEAR'S UP.

FOR WEEKS NOW,
TERRY HAS BEEN
IGNORING HIS BODY'S
SIGNS THAT SOMETHING
MAY BE
WRONG. HE'S BEEN
ABLE TO RATIONALIZE
ALL OF IT AWAY.

EVEN NOW HE TELLS HIM-
SELF THAT THE COMPUTER
MONITOR IS PUTTING A STRAIN
ON HIS EYES--NOTHING MORE,
NOTHING LESS. HE'S BEEN OBSESSED
WITH TRYING TO PROVE THAT HIS
BOSS IS INVOLVED IN TREASONOUS
EXTRA-GOVERNMENTAL ACTIVITIES.

IN THE PROCESS, HIS PRIORITIES
HAVE BEEN DRIFTING AWAY FROM
HIS OWN BEST INTERESTS.

HE'LL COME TO REGRET THAT.

JULIA, COULD I GET YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR?

SURE. WHAT DO YOU NEED?

CAN YOU FILE THIS STACK AWAY? I THINK I'VE FOUND WHAT I WAS LOOKING FOR.

I HOPE IT'S SOMETHING THAT'LL HELP US BOTH OUT. RIGHT, TERRY?

UM... YES, SIR.

SO WHAT **EXACTLY** HAVE YOU PIECED TOGETHER...? MORE INFORMATION ON SPAWN, I HOPE. THE PRESIDENT'S AIDES HAVE BEEN HUNGRY FOR SOME CONCRETE ANSWERS TO HIS RECENT TERRORIST ATTACK.*

*ISSUE #36 -- TOM.

THEY SEEM TO BELIEVE HE'S WORKING IN CONNECTION WITH SOME FOREIGN MILITIA.

A FEW MORE DETAILS SHOULD SATISFY THEM, DON'T YOU THINK.

YES, SIR.

I UNDERSTAND YOU'VE BEEN QUITE AGGRESSIVE TRYING TO SORT THROUGH THIS MESS.

I WANT TO BE ABSOLUTELY POSITIVE BEFORE YOU GET MY FINAL REPORTS.

THEY'LL BE ON YOUR DESK AS SOON AS I'M SURE.

EXCELLENT. I'LL BE ANXIOUS TO READ THEM.

CAN YOU HOLD
MY CALLS FOR
THE REST OF THE
DAY, JULIA.

YOU BET.
WHAT
ABOUT
WANDA?

I'LL
TAKE
HERS.

GOT
IT.

THAT WAS TOO CLOSE.
IF WYNN WAS TO EVER FIND
OUT I'VE BEEN DIGGING INTO HIS
ACTIVITIES, I DON'T WANT TO
THINK WHAT HE'S CAPABLE OF.
IF I'M RIGHT, HE'S ALSO THE ONE
WHO SET ME UP, MAKING EVERYONE
THINK I WAS SOME KIND OF
MURDERER*... WHICH MEANS
HE'S CONNECTED TO EVERY
LEGAL AND ILLEGAL AGENCY
IN THIS COUNTRY. IF I'M
NOT CAREFUL...

HEART
RACING,
TERRY
WAKES
FOUR
MINUTES
LATER. THIS
TIME HE'S
SCARED.
WHY
WOULD
HE HAVE
A BLACK
OUT, HE
WONDERS.

AND THE
BLURRED
VISION?

SOMETHING
IS TERRIBLY
WRONG.

*ISSUES 20-24 -- TOM.

WITH A SHAKY
QUICKNESS, HE
CLEANS THE MESS
AROUND HIS
DESK, THEN
LEAVES, TELLING
NO ONE WHAT
JUST HAPPENED

HE MENTIONS NOTHING TO
WANDA. SHE'S ALREADY
BEEN HARPING ON HIM TO
CHECK WITH THE DOCTOR
ABOUT HIS RECENT
COUGHING FITS.

WITH ALL THE PRESSURE
THAT'S BEEN IN THEIR
LIVES OF LATE, HE DOESN'T
WANT TO SCARE HER.

FOR HIMSELF, IT'S
ALREADY TOO LATE.

Gasp!
Gasp!
Gasp!
Gasp!

ARE YOU GOING TO LIVE, SIR?

JUST GIVE ME A Gasp! SECOND TO CATCH MY BREATH. Hee-Hee! I CAN'T BELIEVE THE ELEVATOR WOULD DO THIS.

I DON'T BELIEVE YOUR EFFORTS TO PRY THE DOORS OPEN WOULD TRIGGER A HEART ATTACK.

THE GYM. I'VE GOT TO GET BACK. I'LL BE WITH YOU IN ANOTHER TEN SECONDS.

DON'T STRAIN YOURSELF.

EVENTUALLY THE DOORS ARE WORKED OPEN. BY THEN, DETECTIVES BURKE AND TWITCH ARE DEVOID OF ANY HUMOR.

WE DID IT!!

I'LL PHONE THE SUPER-INTENDANT TOMORROW MORNING. AND IF THIS ISN'T FIXED IN TWO DAYS, I'M DEDUCTING A MONTH'S RENT.



WHOEVER THIS MYSTERY MAN IS, HE'S VERY FAMILIAR WITH US. I WONDER WHY?

CHOMP! WE'LL FIGURE IT OUT. TOMORROW THEY'RE SUPPOSED TO DELIVER THE REST OF THE FURNITURE. GULP! THEN WE CAN GET DOWN TO SOME REAL NITTY GRITTY.
SLURP!





IT'S BEEN GOING ON FOR OVER TWENTY MINUTES. AT FIRST THEY CRAWL IN EVERY DIRECTION, CANVASSING AS MUCH OF THE SYMBIOTE'S BEING AS POSSIBLE.

THEN, WHEN THEIR "AURA OF EVIL" HAS BEEN PASSED ON TO THE OUTER SHELL OF THE HELLSPAWN, THEY SLITHER UP TO THE BEING'S HIGHEST POINT.

THEY ARE THE WORMS. THE CARRIERS. GOD'S CREATURES, EVOLVED NOW... SPECIALIZED... TO ABSORB THE SINS OF THE LIVING AND TRANSFER THEM TO THE UNDEAD.

THOUGH HE FIGHTS IT, AL SIMMONS IS A SLAVE TO THIS NEW RITUAL. INTELLECTUALLY, HE IS AWARE OF THE PROCESS, BUT HE CANNOT PHYSICALLY CONTROL ANY OF IT.

THE SYMBIOTE MUST FEED ITSELF.

FORTUNATELY, IT WON'T MATTER. THE CEREMONY WILL CONCLUDE IN ANOTHER FEW MINUTES.

ELSEWHERE.

HEY!?

WHO BUILT
THIS FRIGGIN' BON-
FIRE? IT BARELY WARMs
MY NOSE. MAN, AIN'T
NO ONE GOT ANY
CAMPING SKILLS
AROUND HERE?
BURP!

YOU'RE
DRUNK,
ORVILLE.

WELL,
SO ARE
YOU!
-GASP!-

YOU'RE RIGHT.
-BURP!- OH, THAT
TASTED GOOD. NOW
THAT YOU'VE
REMINDED ME, IT'S
TIME TO MAKE THE
OL' BLADDER
GLADDER.

BEING SOME-
WHAT MODEST,
BOBBY SEARCHES
FOR A BIT OF A
PRIVATE SPOT TO
DO HIS BUSINESS.

DO IT
YOURSELF
NEXT TIME,
THEN.

YEAH, BOBBY.
INSTEAD OF GET-
TING PLASTERED,
WHY DON'T YA
DO SOMETHING
CONSTRUCTIVE,
LIKE PUT
ANOTHER PIECE'A
WOOD ON?

GOD, I'M
GONNA
BURST.

HGHK!

Tinkle
Tinkle
UW?
SLASH

WE HAVE TO TALK.

THE IMAGE SOBERS BOBBY INSTANTLY.

JEE-ZUS,

AL! I THINK I CRAPPED MYSELF. WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I NEED A FAVOR. SOMETHING'S HAPPENING TO ME, AND I CAN'T STOP IT, SO I HAVE TO DISAPPEAR FOR A WHILE. I DON'T KNOW HOW LONG. I NEED YOU TO TELL THE OTHERS I'VE LEFT.

BUT I'LL STILL BE AROUND. YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THAT.

U...THANKS, I GUESS. ANYTHING I CAN DO TO HELP?

NO, THIS IS MY PROBLEM. YOU'VE DEALT WITH ENOUGH OF MY FALL-OUT.



WHERE
WILL YOU
BE?

I CAN'T
TELL YOU.
AT LEAST NOT
NOW. YOU'RE
SAFER NOT
KNOWING.

MY
EXISTENCE
SEEMS TO ATTRACT
THINGS. UGLY THINGS.
I'VE BECOME SOME DAMN
MAGNET OF MISERY--
WHICH WOULD BE FINE IF
IT DIDN'T SPILL OVER,
BUT I CAN'T CONTROL
THAT. SO I HAVE
TO HIDE.

EVEN
FROM YOU.



SEE,
I WON'T
LET YOU
DIE A
SECOND
TIME.*



GOOD-BYE,
MY FRIEND.
I HAVE WORK
TO DO.



WE EXPECT THE REQUESTED MEETING TO BE CONFIRMED WITHIN 48 HOURS. THE AREA WILL BE PROPERLY SECURED, AND OUR SURVEILLANCE TEAMS ARE ALREADY IN PLACE.

ADDITIONALLY, I'VE ESTABLISHED THAT ALL PARTIES INVOLVED ARE TO MAINTAIN A DISTANCE PRIOR TO THE MEETING SO AS NOT TO BRING ATTENTION TO THEMSELVES.

BEFORE I IMPLEMENT THESE ANY FURTHER, DO YOU REQUIRE ANY FURTHER ASSIGNMENTS BE DEVELOPED?

NO, THANK YOU.

ALL I NEED IN BRINGING ABOUT THE DEMISE OF OUR TWO FRIENDS IS **RIGHT HERE.**

VERY GOOD, SIR.

I'M TELLING YOU, JASON, THERE AIN'T **NOTHING** LIKE A GOOD WITCH-HUNT.





Tyrant
Lizard
King

EMPIRE

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